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Atty. Docket No.: P70107US0

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend and add claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A ski binding for a cross country  
ski boot, in particular for cross-country skiing, comprising a  
sliding element displaceable in the a running direction when  
skiing, as well as at least two spring-loaded latching pins  
facing away from one another and movable in transverse direction  
for latching engagement engaging in corresponding fittings in the  
a tip region of the ski boot, (step-in mechanism), characterized  
in that each of the two said latching pins (101) is being  
respectively carried by a pair of molded part (109) that is  
movable transversely to the running direction, parts located in  
mirror-inverted relationship on either side of the binding, each  
which molded part each is being loaded by a spring acting to move  
said molded part and respective latching pin transversely to the  
running direction and having an element guided in one a link each  
of the sliding element (142), which sliding element is  
displaceable in the running direction.

2. (Currently Amended) A The ski binding according to claim  
1, characterized in that wherein the sliding element (142) is  
guided in the running direction on a base plate (129) fastened to

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the ski, the base plate ~~(129)~~ being covered at least in ~~a~~ ~~the~~ region of the tip of the ski boot by a housing ~~(100)~~ in which openings ~~(103)~~ are provided on either side thereof so as to receive the latching pins ~~(101)~~ of the step-in mechanism.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The ski binding according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the sliding element ~~(142)~~, via a hinge ~~(130)~~ extending transversely to the running direction, is connected to a lever ~~(130)~~ that projects obliquely upwards in the running direction, having and has an oblique surface ~~(105)~~ destined for stepping out of said binding, and a depression for insertion of ~~the a~~ ski pole for opening the binding.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The ski binding according to claim ~~± 2~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the base plate ~~(129)~~ is provided with a peripheral rib ~~(107)~~ which engages in a corresponding groove ~~(108)~~ of the housing ~~part~~ ~~(100)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The ski binding according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ on both sides of the binding, the latching pins ~~(101)~~ project from one molded part ~~(109)~~ each, ~~which molded parts~~ ~~(109)~~ are located in mirror-inverted

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~~relationship on either side of the binding and provided with wherein said movable part element guided in the link includes a projection {110} extending into a said link on the sliding element.~~

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The ski binding according to claim 5, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the link ~~consists of~~ preferably includes triangular openings ~~{111 or 111', respectively,}~~ located symmetrically opposite each other about an axis extending transversely to the running direction, ~~and each of said openings being~~ provided with a guiding face ~~{112, or 112', respectively,}~~ on which the respective projection ~~{110}~~ of the molded part ~~{109}~~ is supported.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The ski binding according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the molded parts ~~{109}~~ are each provided with a tapped blind hole ~~{113}~~ for receiving the a pressure spring ~~{136}~~ which is tensioned between the oppositely arranged molded parts ~~{109}~~.

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8. (Currently Amended) A The ski binding according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein viewed in the running direction,~~ at least two pressure springs ~~(136)~~ are adjacently arranged.

9. (Currently Amended) A The ski binding according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein the links of the sliding element include openings and said oppositely arranged projections (110) of the molded parts (109) are supported on oblique guiding faces (112, 112') in the said openings (111, 111') of the sliding element (142), which openings serve as links, and, by displacement of the sliding element, are movable towards or away from each other, respectively, and are under the action of the spring springs (136).~~

10. (Currently Amended) A The ski binding according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that the wherein a ski-tip side end of the sliding element (142) or its end facing away from the lever (130) is guided in a bridge part (114) of the housing (110).~~

11. (New) The ski binding according to claim 1, wherein each of said pins has a rounded portion at an outer end thereof,

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said rounded portion being located above a plane that extends through a longitudinal axis of said pins.

12. (New) A ski binding for cross-country skiing, comprising a sliding element displaceable in a running direction when skiing, at least two spring-loaded latching pins for latching engagement in corresponding fittings in a tip region of a ski boot, each of the two latching pins being carried by a respective molded part, said molded parts being oppositely arranged relative to one another with each molded part having a tapped blind hole for receiving a pressure spring which is tensioned between said oppositely arranged molded parts and which acts to move said molded parts and latching pins transversely to the running direction, each of said molded parts being seated in said sliding element.

13. (New) The ski binding according to claim 12, wherein each molded part has a projection that extends into an opening in the sliding element, said projections being supported on oblique guiding faces within the openings such that, by displacement of the sliding element, said projections are movable toward or away

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from each other, respectively, under action of the pressure spring.

14. (New) A ski binding for cross-country skiing, comprising a sliding element displaceable in a running direction when skiing, at least two latching pins for latching engagement in corresponding fittings in a tip region of a ski boot, each of the two latching pins being carried by a respective molded part that is loaded by a respective pressure spring so as to be movable transversely to the running direction, said pressure springs being adjacently arranged, and each of said movable parts being guided in a respective link of the sliding element.

15. (New) The ski binding according to claim 14, wherein the latching pins face away from one another, with the respective molded parts being located in mirror-inverted relationship on either side of the binding.

16. (New) The ski binding according to claim 14, wherein each molded part has a projection that extends into the respective link of the sliding element.

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17. (New) The ski binding according to claim 14, wherein said links include openings in the sliding element, each of said movable parts having a projection that extends into a respective opening and is supported on an oblique guiding face therein such that, by displacement of the sliding element, said projections are movable towards or away from each other, respectively, under action of the spring.

18. (New) A ski binding for cross-country skiing, comprising a sliding element displaceable in a running direction when skiing, at least two spring-loaded latching pins for latching engagement in corresponding fittings in a tip region of a ski boot, each of the two latching pins being carried by a respective molded part that is loaded by a spring so as to be movable transversely to the running direction, each of said movable parts having a projection that extends into a respective opening in the sliding element, said projections being supported on oblique guiding faces in the openings and, by displacement of the sliding element, being movable towards or away from each other, respectively, under action of the spring.

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19. (New) The ski binding according to claim 18, wherein the molded parts are oppositely arranged on either side of the binding.

20. (New) The ski binding according to claim 18, wherein each of said pins has a rounded portion at an outer end thereof, said rounded portion being located above a plane that extends through a longitudinal axis of said pins.